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ABSTRACT

A project to design a model curriculum development guide for a broadly transferable Associate Degree program in Human Services for drug abuse workers was initiated at Miami-Dade Community College (Florida). The curriculum was intended for implementation through a national consortium of community colleges. Central to the program, which would recruit recently rehabilitated substance abusers as students, was the concept of the "Program Manager", whose role would include being an academic counselor for student participants, program coordinator, academic negotiator, and student support person. Criteria for appointment as a Program Manager and determinants for selection of community colleges as consortium members were established, the latter emphasizing accreditation and credit articulation with a senior institution, curriculum flexibility, and urban locale. Learning objectives were developed in terms of the 14 roles identified for drug abuse workers and were categorized as Generic Human Services or Substance Abuse Specific, with instructional concerns in habilitation and problem dependencies. Pending funding for program implementation, limited development of instructional material is currently in progress. (RT)

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DEVELOPING A NATIONAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROGRAM FOR HUMAN SERVICES/DRUG ABUSE WORKERS

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In late 1975 Miami-Dade Community College received a grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse to design a model curriculum Development Guide for a largely external, broadly transferable Associate Degree Program in Human Services and to convene a National Conference for selected community college personnel to (1) acquaint them with the demand for drug abuse curriculum and (2) organize and develop a consortium of community colleges in selected cities in the United States for the purpose of offering an Associate Degree in Human Services.

Two persons from Miami-Dade were designated to pursue these goals: James O'Connor, Project Director, and me as Academic Coordinator. Our first effort was to become familiar with other human services/substance abuse programs and particularly the National Institute for Drug Program's pioneering endeavor at Marjorie Webster Junior College, Washington, D.C. We were able to extract from their program materials almost 300 specific learning objectives. After this extraction, we created a task-force of disciplinary specialists from the instructional staff of our institution to analyze these objectives in terms of their appropriateness to Miami-Dade course offerings. This exercise established that all objectives, except for those relating to management and to the actual process of counseling, were capable of absorption by existing college-parallel courses.

Visits to local facilities and an examination of curriculum efforts by other institutions indicated that counseling skills were deemed to be among the more essential requirements of successful practitioners. If our program were to meet the test of "broadly transferable," specific courses in counseling could not be offered at either our or the baccalaureate level. What we could do was to permit the student to earn partial course credits through his application of psychological and sociological principles in on-the-job counseling situations.

In November we visited with former instructional personnel of the Marjorie Webster program. This visit resulted in a decision regarding a means through which the program should be implemented. As we talked to this dedicated group of pioneers, it became quite evident that they viewed with extreme trepidation

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any attempt to externalize instructional efforts for substance abuse workers. They feared that such an effort would inevitably lead to alienating the very clientele that the program purported to serve. Success in the program, they repeatedly reiterated, required a corps of committed instructors who could, and would, offer the strong emotional support that recently rehabilitated substance abusers, a major component of student recruitment efforts for the program, required and expected.

This meeting led us to a sobering reappraisal of the validity of a largely external instructional program; and from this grew the concept of the Program Manager.

Cardinal to the success of any effort is the nature of its management. For most endeavors, management models are extant that can be modified to fit any organizational needs. Enterprises that are truly innovative, however, deny an opportunity to utilize existing models. We believe that a national Human Services/Drug Abuse program falls into this category. It is unique. It is not only national but ultimately it is to be offered largely through non-traditional instructional modes. Its successful development and implementation will tax the managerial skill of each college participant.

Who the manager is (if, indeed, there is to be a single manager at each institution), what his responsibilities are, what precise duties he assumes, are all questions to be determined on an institutional basis.

It is our hope, however, that each member institution will carefully consider the nature of the program and the uniqueness of the clientele and consider the appointment of a single individual as Program Manager. The scope of this role will be:

1. Academic counselor for all student participants. As such, he should have not only a thorough understanding of the Human Services/Drug Abuse program, but should also be sufficiently well-informed so as to advise the student on:

   a. higher academic transfer possibilities,

   b. prospects for employment and at what capacities and what remuneration upon completion of associates, bachelors, and masters degree levels,

   c. possible vocational avenues in other areas of the human services,

d. opportunities to acquire academic credits for previously acquired learning experiences: CLEP, Credit-by-examination, etc., and

e. emotional and intellectual demands of the program and the field so that he can adequately advise students "into" and "out-of" the program.

2. Academic coordinator. In this role the program manager will coordinate the attainment of program objectives with appropriate facilities personnel in experiential learning situations.

   Since the ultimate goal of the program is to provide the maximum external instruction within the capacity of the institution, the human services program manager needs to meet with other academic area specialists both within the campus community and within the consortium.

3. Academic negotiator. In this role the program manager will negotiate credit-by-examination procedures with other members of the college community and negotiate entry of his students either into specific courses or into significant and appropriate segments of courses in the fulfillment of consortium objectives. As the program moves toward greater externality, the program manager will have the responsibility of acting as an intermediary between the student and specific subject area specialists.

4. Provider of emotional and intellectual support for his students. We consider this role to be the most crucial played by the program manager. In fact, the whole concept of program manager was born from this role definition. We anticipate that a significant number of our students will have had extensive recent experience in a social setting that provided maximal emotional and psychological support. While our goal should be in terms of fostering socially acceptable, self-reliant personalities relatively free of problem dependencies, judicious care should be taken to assure that their academic environment is not abruptly different from their recent supportive experience. The kind of support that we are talking about is not permissive coddling; in fact, an overly permissive attitude on our part might well abort whatever habilitation progress the student has made to date. We must emphasize that learning is the student's responsibility and that the program

manager's role is to provide him with the means of meeting his responsibility, that the procedures for awarding grades in the program are to be as rigorously adhered to as in any other program in the institution. The program manager will provide his students with all the aid and assistance that the college possesses in the furtherance of the learning task.

This supportive role requires that the program manager be maximally available to his students. He should specify those times that he is available for campus and telephone conferences and he should plan for on-site student visitations. He should convey to his students the assurance that he is concerned with their educational progress.

In addition, the program manager will have certain ancillary responsibilities. He will have to assume the responsibility of developing program materials, not only for his campus operations but also for those objectives amenable to the development of modularized learning supplements for which there is an acknowledged consortium need. If the program is ultimately to approach near total externality, this task could prove to be quite formidable.

The right of each participating institution to employ the personnel that they feel most competent to develop and implement the Human Services/Drug Abuse program is, again, uniquely theirs. Mimai-Dade has no mandate to impose its views on the academic sovereignties that comprise the consortium. However, we have offered some criteria for the appointment of program managers. Candidates for this position should possess:

1. the capability of lending necessary emotional support to participants in the program,

2. a student-oriented teaching philosophy,

3. a broad academic background, especially in the area of the social and behavioral sciences,

4. a history of human services involvement (especially desirable would be specific experience with substance abuse rehabilitation programs),

5. contacts with community Human Services agencies and personnel,

6. broad contacts throughout the academic community,

7. a willingness to support every aspect of the program,

8. a superior ability to communicate,

9. a commitment to punctuality and professional responsibility, and

10. a concern for detail and careful record keeping.

The next step in creating a national Human Services program for substance abuse workers was to determine the criteria for selecting other institutions to participate in this joint venture. In cooperation with the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the Center for Human Services (CHS), and the Career Development Center (CDC), it was determined that participating colleges:

1. be accredited by one of the six regional accrediting associations and have an open door policy,

2. have cooperated with national "Open Learning" projects and a willingness to share any open learning courses that they may have developed,

3. be located in large metropolitan areas,

4. be located near a Regional Training Center,

5. be receptive to non-traditional approaches in instruction,

6. have an upper division institution in the region to which students may transfer credits earned in this program toward a b chelor's degree,

7. be acceptable to the funding agency or its designee,

8. agree to design the program so that the program will be self-supporting at the conclusion of the funding period,

9. be committed to the expansion of the national consortium to include other institutions,

10. be willing to work with components of the National Training System, and

11. be acceptable to the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC).

Utilizing these criteria, seven community colleges joined us in our initial endeavors along with two adjunct participants. From two national conferences with curriculum representatives from ten schools, it was determined that learning objectives would be categorized in two broad areas: (1) Generic Human Services and (2) Substance Abuse Specific.

Since many of the curriculum representatives were concurrently teachers of human services programs or familiar with the concept, it was determined that broad instructional goals could be developed by focusing on the two major concerns of the human services industry. These concerns are habilitation and problem dependencies.

After the development of instructional objectives, we turned our attention to devising specific learning objectives. These objectives were devised in terms of what human services workers do, as described by Dr. Bertram Brown of the National Institute on Mental Health. In his fourteen roles of the generalist, Dr. Brown defined the following:

1. Outreach (human link) Worker - reaches out to detect people with problems to refer them to appropriate services and to follow them up to make sure they continue to their maximum rehabilitation level.

2. Broker - helps people get to the existing services and helps the services relate more easily to clients.

3. Advocate - pleads and fights for services, policies, rules, regulations, and laws for clients.

4. Evaluator - assesses client or community needs and problems whether medical, psychiatric, social, educational, etc. This includes formulating plans and explaining them to all concerned.

5. Teacher-Educator - performs a range of instructional activities from simple coaching to teaching highly technical content directed to individuals or groups.

6. Behavior Changer - carries out a range of activities planned primarily to change behavior, ranging from coaching and counseling to casework, psychotherapy, and behavior therapy.

7. Mobilizer - helps to get new resources for clients or communities.

8. Consultant - works with other helping persons and agencies regarding their handling of problems, needs, and programs.

9. Community Planner - works with community boards, committees, etc., to assure that community developments enhance positive mental health and self and social actualization, or at least minimizes emotional stress and strains on people.

10. Care Giver - provides services for persons who need ongoing support of some kind (i.e., financial assistance, day care, social support, 24-hour care).

11. Data Manager - performs all aspects of data handling, gathering, tabulating, analyzing, synthesizing, and program evaluation and planning.

12. Administrator - carries out activities that are primarily agency or institution-oriented rather than client or community-oriented (budgeting, purchasing, personnel activities, etc.).

13. Assistant to Specialist - this role is kept since there is undoubtedly some need for aides and assistants to the existing professions and specialties.

14. Clerical - performs primarily secretarial/receptionist type duties in a Human Services setting but job does not relate directly to mental health functions.

After delineating our own learning objectives, those from the Marjorie Webster experience were added.

The substance abuse objectives were based upon learning needs perceived by curriculum members, and again the Marjorie Webster objectives were added.

Having agreed upon tentative goals and objectives, the next step logically would have been directed toward the appointment of Program Managers in the several institutions who would then check instructional objectives against the needs of facilities from which students would be drawn. He would then recruit adjunct instructional personnel from the facilities, and begin to coordinate involvement with instructional personnel in the appropriate academic areas crucial to the program. Finally, he would begin to develop instructional methodologies and materials that lend themselves to non-traditional learning.

Unfortunately, NIDA was unable to provide major funding necessary for these ends. Miami-Dade, however, did receive a small grant from NIDA for the limited development of instructional materials. One aspect of this grant calls for the development of a text incorporating the objectives of the generic human services aspect of the program. Additionally, there is to be a series of six modules dealing specifically with the objectives from the substance abuse aspect of the program.

We have continued to pursue funding from NIDA for our collective efforts. Hopefully, the near future will provide support which will allow the educational community and the National Training System (NTS) to work together in the search for some answers to a complex set of societal problems of continuing concern.

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